



Recommendation for Action

File #: 21-2910, **Agenda Item #:** 27.

9/30/2021

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of a park operations and maintenance agreement with The Trail Foundation for the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail at Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

Lead Department

Parks and Recreation Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

March 12, 2020 - Council approved Resolution No. 20200312-041, which directed the City Manager to work with parks nonprofit partners that have established relationships with the Parks and Recreation Department, including but not limited to The Trail Foundation and the Pease Park Conservancy, to create opportunities for partnership agreements that benefit the community, and to outline roles and responsibilities between those groups and the Parks and Recreation Department, on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Harper-Madison absent.

For More Information:

Kimberly McNeeley, Director, 512-974-6717; Christine Chute Canul, Program Manager II, 512-579-1013; Sammi Curless, Business Process Specialist 512-974-6716.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

August 18, 2021 - Environmental Commission briefing.

August 24, 2021 - Recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board on an 8-0 vote with Board Member Taylor absent and two vacancies.

Additional Backup Information:

The City of Austin (City) and The Trail Foundation (TTF) have agreed that the public benefits of the Ann and Roy Butler Hike and Bike Trail and surrounding parkland would be substantially enhanced through an expanded collaboration between the two parties as recommended by the Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Panel held in 2019, as well as improvements of the parkland in accordance with the previously developed Urban Forestry and Natural Areas Management Guidelines adopted by TTF, the Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) and Watershed Protection Department (WPD) in 2015.

The Trail Foundation has led fundraising and development in the park for over 18 years resulting in a total financial investment to date of over \$17,500,000.

The Park Operations and Maintenance Agreement will begin a phased transition of daily maintenance to TTF. Initially, TTF will be the primary responsible party for TTF built infrastructure while providing supplementary support to other areas of the Trail and surrounding parkland. The Trail has been designated into four segments: Southeast, Northeast, Northwest and Southwest. Through a methodical and conservative

approach, additional responsibilities for each segment will transition to TTF over a series of years as outlined in the operations and maintenance plan, including but not limited to turf care, tree care, invasive removals, restroom maintenance and trail edge vegetation. The Trail Foundation will be actively programming the park to provide free family activities (e.g., kids adopt-a-garden at Camacho Recreation Center and Santa on the Trail), nature-based programming for all-ages (e.g., Trees of the Trail Scavenger Hunt and Wildflower Walks), cultural activations and public art (being formalized through a comprehensive public art plan in partnership with Art In Public Places) and additional recreational opportunities (e.g., on Trail fitness programs). The Trail Foundation will host a limited number of partially open events in specific areas of the park. All earned revenue from special events and rentals will be utilized to directly benefit the park via operations, maintenance, programming or park improvements. The Trail will remain accessible and open to the public during special events.

The Trail Foundation will continue to follow all City codes and regulations, approval and permit processes and community engagement standards. Designated City staff from both PARD and WPD will also participate in a Joint Advisory Management Committee, which will be established with the completion of the agreement, with members of TTF to ensure Director-approved annual plans and deliverables are being implemented successfully and the agreement terms and deliverables are being met. As with previous City Council approved agreements of this nature, the annual programming plan will return to City Council for review and direction for the first two years of the agreement.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Health and Environment, Culture and Lifelong Learning, Government that Works for All.